

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 L-03 LAB-06

SIL-01 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 NSC-07 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0241

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

FAA BRUSSELS

UNCLAS PARIS 15333

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, FR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: CONCORDE

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS, LABOR SITUATION IS BEGINNING TO DETERIORATE AT AEROSPATIALE PLANT AT TOULOUSE FOLLOWING FIRST MEASURES TAKEN BY MANAGEMENT TO IMPLEMENT DECISION OF LAST MARCH (PARIS 7398) TO CUT BACK ON EMPLOYMENT LEVEL. BRIEF WORK STOPPAGES OCCURRED LAST WEEK IN PROTEST. MARCEL CAVAILLE, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, MET IN TOULOUSE WITH TRADE UNION REPS FROM AEROSPATIALE WHO, REPORTS LE MONDE, SOUGHT ASSURANCES ON CONTINUATION OF CONCORDE PROGRAM IN THE LIGHT OF RECURRING RUMORS THAT PROGRAM MIGHT BE ABANDONED. CAVAILLE IS REPORTED TO HAVE AGREED TO CHAIR A TRIPARTITE MEETING -- GOF, MANAGEMENT, AND TRADE UNION REPS -- TO DISCUSS AEROSPATIALE'S CURRENT PROBLEMS AND TO HAVE INDICATED THAT FURTHER PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS WILL BE DELAYED AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER SUMMER VACATION PERIOD.

2. RE CONCORDE, CAVAILLE TOLD TRADE UNIONS REPS  
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THAT GOF WOULD DO ITS UTMOST TO SPEED UP CERTIFICATION OF CONCORDE AND ITS ENTRY INTO COMMERCIAL

SERVICE. HE INDICATED THAT GOF EXPECTS TO ENCOUNTER RESISTANCE FROM UK, HOWEVER, IN PLANNING TO EXTEND CONCORDE PRODUCTION FROM SIXTEEN AIRCRAFT NOW PROGRAMMED TO NINETEEN AS GOF HAD PROPOSED LAST FEBRUARY. CAVAILLE FURTHER REPORTED RECEIPT OF LETTER FROM WEDGEWOOD-BENN IN WHICH LATTER WROTE THAT SUCCESS OF RECENT CONCORDE FLIGHTS TO RIO AND BOSTON HAD FAVORABLY INFLUENCED BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND AUGURED WELL FOR CONTINUATION OF FRANCO-BRITISH COOPERATION ON CONCORDE.

3. CAVAILLE ASLO ALSO SAID THAT GOF WOULD NOT BE OPPOSED TO LAUNCHING INITIAL STUDIES ON A SECOND GENERATION SST, UTILIZING A NEW SNECMA-BUILT ENGINE, AND HE WOULD RAISE THIS QUESTION WHEN HE MET WITH HIS BRITISH COUNTERPART IN LATE JULY. (SEE SEPTTEL ON LATTER POINT.) LASTLY, CAVAILLE IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT HE DID NOT RULE OUT "HYPOTHESIS" OF EVENTUAL COOPERATION WITH US ON DEVELOPMENT OF SECOND GENERATION SST, WHICH WAS A POSSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE OF SUPERSONIC COMMERCIAL AVIATION.

4. ARTICLE IN LE MONDE OF JUNE 18, ENTITLED "MORE DEMONSTRATION FLIGHTS BY CONCORDE RISKS OPENING THE WAY TO AN AMERICAN COMPETITOR FOR THE SECOND GENERATION (SST)", WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FOCUSING RENEWED ATTENTION ON THIS "HYPOTHESIS" OF POSSIBLE US-FRENCH SST COOPERATION. LE MONDE THESIS WAS THAT SUCCESS OF DEMONSTRATION FLIGHTS IN OVERCOMING PREJUDICES AGAINST CONCORDE (E.G., NOISE LEVEL) AND IN DEMONSTRATING ITS COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL MIGHT INCITE US INDUSTRY TO LAUNCH SECOND GENERATION SST, STEALING SST MARKET FROM FRENCH AND BRITISH WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED BY FINANCIAL EFFORT OF DEVELOPING FIRST GENERATION CONCORDE. IN SUPPORT OF ITS ARGUMENT LE MONDE CITES RECENT CALTECH SPEECH BY LOCKHEED PRESIDENT CLAIMING THAT IT IS THE US WHICH

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"WILL HAVE" THE SECOND GENERATION SST.  
COMMENT: A HIGH OFFICIAL OF SECRETARIAT OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT INFORMALLY SOUNDED US OUT RE LE MONDE ARTICLE. IN REPLY WE NOTED THAT ARTICLE WAS PURELY SPECULATIVE AND WE ADDED THAT WE WOULD GUESS THAT MORE PRESSING, SHORT-TERM CORPORATE PROBLEMS THAT PRESIDENT OF LOCKHEED COULD BE EXPECTED TO HAVE ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS MIGHT MAKE HIM NOT THE MOST CONVINCING INDUSTRY SPOKESMAN ON ANY EVENTUAL US RESUMPTION OF SST DEVELOPMENT.

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## Message Attributes

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